

The Business Block (preferred)  
(Meyer & Thalheimer)  
10-12 North Howard Street  
Private

ca. 1886

The Business Block is an excellent rendition of the eclectic Commercial style of the late 19th century. The building's facade combines elements of the Romanesque Revival with the forms and organization of the Chicago School of commercial architecture. The Business Block is representative of the earlier works of Baldwin and Pennington, displaying the beginnings of the firm's characteristic favoring of geometric forms over ornamentation.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic The Business Block (preferred)

and/or common Meyer & Thalheimer Building

### 2. Location

street & number 10-12 North Howard Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ☐ vicinity of congressional district 3rd

state Maryland county

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Aaron Straus & Lillie Straus Foundation, Inc.

street & number 101 W. Mount Royal Avenue telephone no.: 752-6209

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Baltimore 21201

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber MLP 9198

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 129

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Baltimore City Neighborhood Survey

date 1976 ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

## 7. Description

Survey No. B-2343

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### SUMMARY

The Business Block is a five-story brick commercial building erected about 1886 on the west side of North Howard Street between Fayette and Baltimore Streets in central Baltimore, Maryland. The main elevation faces east and has a four-bay red brick facade ornamented with molded brick and carved brownstone or terra cotta trim in the intertwining style of the Romanesque Revival. The building's first story has been altered in the mid-20th century with the addition of plate glass windows and corrugated metal panels. The building is currently unoccupied and for rent.

### General Description:

The building originally housed two stores on the main floor with storage and manufacturing lofts on the upper floors. The four-bay facade reflects these uses. The first story was altered in the mid-20th century with large plate glass window walls separated by a large single pier. The pier extends up through the entire facade. The window surrounds and exterior of the first floor up to the sill level of the second story are covered with corrugated metal panels. The second through the fourth stories are dominated by four arches. Each bay contains paired narrow windows with Queen Anne sash. The fourth story windows are arched and have multiple light upper sashes. The lintels and sills of each story are rough-faced brownstone and correspond with smooth-faced brownstone belt courses with foliated carving. At the spring of the arches, these stones are heavily carved with intertwining leaves. Molded bricks laid in decorative courses form the spandrels between the floors.

A small carved brownstone cornice separates the fourth and fifth floors. The fifth floor has eight round-arched, 1/1 windows deeply recessed and separated by alternating brick piers and brownstone columns with carved floral capitals. The central pier has a molded brick colonette rising from a carved base below the cornice. The parapet above the fifth floor is coffered and ornamented by corner piers with carved pyramidal brownstone finials. The central colonette terminates in a brownstone sunburst and torch.

The ornamentation continues around the corner of the building on the south elevation, facing an alley. The first floor cornice terminates in an organic intertwined scroll above rusticated brownstone quoins. Each detail of the main elevation is repeated in one bay from the second floor through the parapet. Apart from this one bay, the south elevation contains a functional window

(continue, please)

## 8. Significance

Survey No. B-2343

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

<b>Specific dates</b>	ca. 1886	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Baldwin & Pennington, architects
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check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G  
Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

### SUMMARY:

The Business Block is an excellent rendition of the eclectic Commercial style of the late 19th century. The building's facade combines elements of the Romanesque Revival with the forms and organization of the Chicago School of commercial architecture. The Business Block is representative of the earlier works of Baldwin and Pennington, displaying the beginnings of the firm's characteristic favoring of geometric forms over ornamentation.

### History and Support:

The term "Business Block" as used in this survey originates from an illustration of 10-12 North Howard Street in the Inland Architect and News Record of October 1889. The building had been occupied by Meyer, Reinhard and Co., clothing manufacturers, and Cohen, Adler and Co., shoes, since about 1887. Flanking the Block on the left in the photo is the old Howard House Hotel, a mid-19th century building with shuttered windows and a cast iron balcony railing. On the north side of the Business Block is a four-story brick commercial building typical of the 1830's, with a storefront and 6/6 windows with stone lintels. Howard Street in the 1880's was beginning a period of growth in retail and commercial business which steadily replaced the low scale, rowhouse-derived commercial establishments with large warehouses, manufactories, loft buildings, and, in the early 20th century, with department store buildings. The Business Block was one of the new type, combining functional, high-ceilinged manufacturing floors above sales and showrooms on the street level.

The rusticated stone base, round-arched bays, and foliated basket capitals were in common use in Baltimore and elsewhere, appearing interchangeably in the various Renaissance and Romanesque Revivals in the eclectic style of the late Victorian period. The influence of the Chicago School is apparent in the large windows on the facade. Although the Business Block is a much smaller building than the early skyscrapers of the Chicago commercial style, the same structural system was employed as in the larger buildings. Interior iron columns helped carry some of the weight of the building's structure, allowing higher ceilings and freeing exterior wall space for windows to light the factory levels. The picturesque

(continue, please)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-2343

Baltimore City Directories

Inland Architect and News Record Vol. 14 (4), Oct. 1889

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name Baltimore EastQuadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting		Northing			

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting		Northing			

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

co-terminous with lot size 50 ft. x 106 ft.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Janet Davis, Historical Preservation Analystorganization Comm. for Hist. & Arch. Pres. (CHAP) date January, 1986street & number 606 Tower Suites, 118 N. Howard St. telephone 396-4866city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

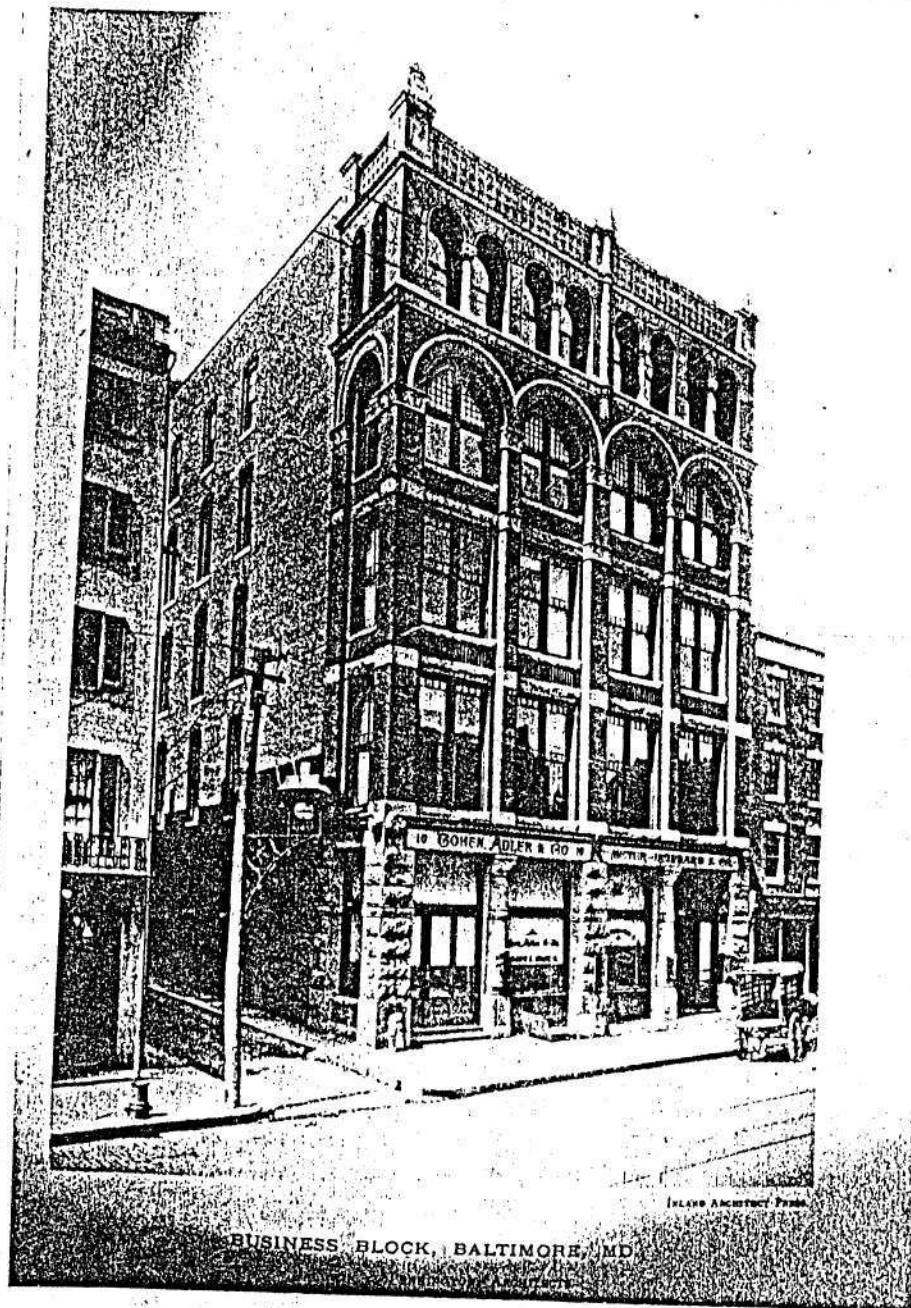
7. Description, cont'd.  
Page 2

arrangement, most with multiple paned industrial sash. The west elevation has six bays, five of which have large 6/6 windows in segmental arched openings. The sixth bay on the southwest corner has small 2/2 windows set within a blind arch. The north elevation was originally a party wall with an adjoining building which has been demolished. Above the roof line of the demolished building are five functionally placed 2/2 windows which appear to be later additions. A mid-20th century painted advertising sign dates from the building's use as a furniture store.

Queen Anne windows are a more conservative feature than the plain plate glass of the "Chicago window".

The exterior decoration also suggests that Baldwin and Pennington were familiar with the latest designs in Chicago. For example, the use of terra cotta banding and capitals in Burnham and Root's Rookery Building of 1885-86 is similar to the brownstone trim of the Business Block. The molded brick spandrels between the floors and the coffered brick parapet of the Business Block may be superficially related to the Rookery Building's finish. However, the Chicago influence is strongest in the expansion of the window walls resulting from the iron support structure. It is the combination of familiar decorative motifs such as the intertwining carving with geometric shapes which gives the Business Block a hint of Baldwin and Pennington's later work. The pyramidal finials at the corners of the parapet covered with the flat Byzantine foliation suggest a beginning fascination with geometry dominant over three-dimensional decoration. In later buildings such as the Professional Building (B-2167) of 1906 and the Benson Building (B-2026) of 1911, the firm had obviously progressed to blockier shapes and flat polygonal forms, partly in response to the general simplification in architectural style, but also as a continuation of their personal style.





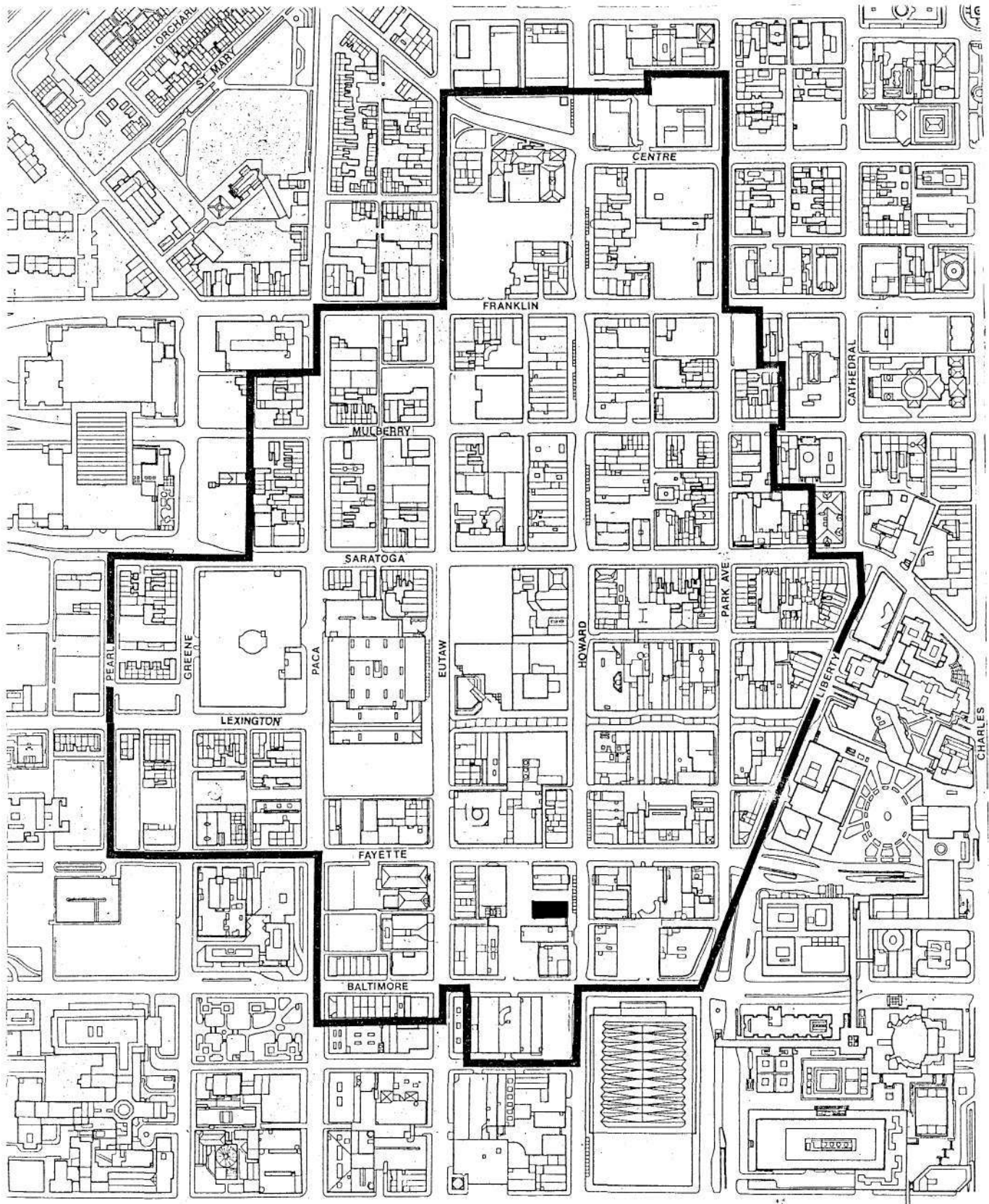
"Business Block, Baltimore, Md."  
Baldwin and Pennington, Architects."

The Inland Architect and News Record,  
Vol. XIV, No. 4, n.p. Oct. 1889

(from photogravure plates; issued only  
to subscribers for the Photogravure ed.)

B-2343





Baltimore Metrocenter Survey  
 Market Center  
 Business Block  
 10-12 North Howard Street  
 B-2343





Business Block

B-2343

10-12 North Howard Street

Market Center - Metrocenter Survey

Baltimore (City), Maryland

Photo: Janet Davis

November 1985

Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust

East elevation

1/2



Business Block B-2343  
10-12 North Howard Street  
Market Center - Metrocenter Survey  
Baltimore (City), Maryland  
Photo: Janet Davis  
November 1985  
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust  
Detail, cornice

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

B-2343  
Blk 632  
MAG #0423435711

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Meyer & Thalheimer Building

AND/OR COMMON

Lee Furniture

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

10-12 N. Howard Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☒ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☒ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☒ AGRICULTURE  
☒ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Records Office Room 601

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

DATE

1976

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL &  
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

CITY, TOWN

Room 900

STATE

26 South Calvert St.  
Baltimore, Md. 21202



## 7 DESCRIPTION

B-2343

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This five story high, four bay wide late Victorian double loft building is built of brick, molded brick and sandstone.

The first floor has been sheathed with green corrugated metal, and huge plate glass windows have been set between the three major structural piers. The double glass door entrance is right of center.

The second through fourth floor windows are set in rigid columns in the four-three story high round arched recessions. Second floor windows are bipartite double hung windows with 1/1 lights with an upper sash consisting of a central pane of glass surrounded by smaller lights. Third floor windows are identical to these. Fourth floor windows are bipartite single hung, with one light and are set beneath semi-circular transoms of many lights. Stone sills and lintels are carried across the face of the building in broken courses. On the face of the piers at the spring points of the molded brick arches, the stone is finished as capitals with carved leaf reliefs. Molded brick laid in basket weave pattern are set in the panels beneath third and fourth story windows.

A minor cornice runs above the arches and is carved with Sullivanesque ornament. A shaft of molded brick pokes a knobby end below the cornice and rises through the fifth floor and parapet in a sunflower and wheat motif. Fifth floor windows are deeply recessed into an arcade of colonnettes with Romanesque capitals. They are double hung with 1/1 lights. The parapet above presents a grid of recessed brick squares and is terminated on either end with blocks carved with stylized sunflowers, surmounted by pinnacles carved with Sullivanesque vines.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

**1885**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built by publisher and real estate developer, Arunah Abell in 1885, this molded brick, stone and terra cotta manufactory originally served as headquarters for Meyer and Thalheimer, printers.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Planning Assistants

ORGANIZATION

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL &  
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

DATE 1976

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Rm 900

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

20 South Calvert St.

STATE

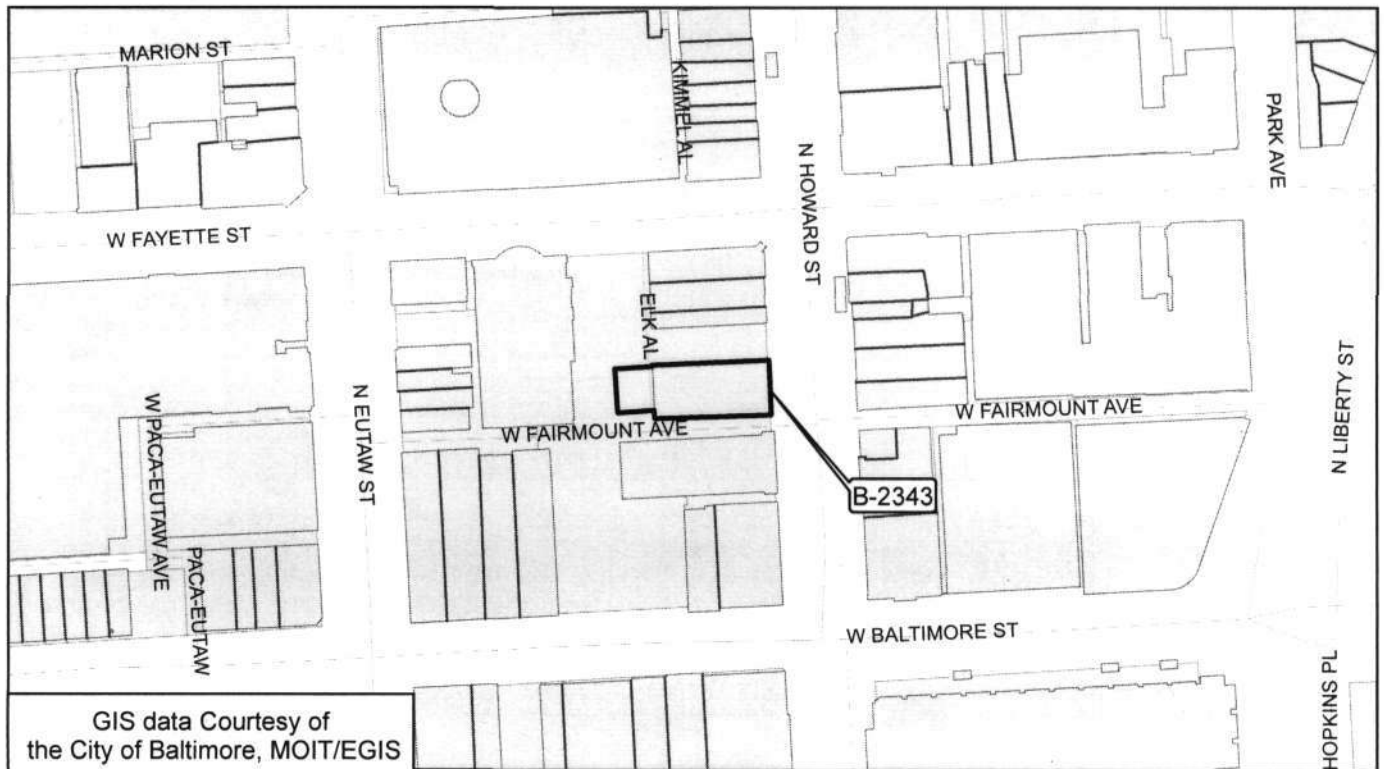
Baltimore, Md. 21202

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The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

B-2343  
Business Block (Meyer and Thalheimer Building)  
10-12 N. Howard Street  
Block 0632, Lot 002  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore East Quad.





10-12 N. Howard

B-2343

Neg #

2/26

B. Pencek

Block

619